

2021 All-Hazards Mitigation Plan Update

DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Kent County, Delaware



PROJECT DETAILS

DIFFICULTY: Medium
COST: \$50,000-\$60,000
TIMEFRAME: Six (6) Months
DELIVERABLES: An updated Hazard Mitigation Plan with a detailed risk and vulnerability assessment, updated countywide and municipal mitigation actions, and additional considerations for Public Health/Pandemic hazards.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- Hazard Mitigation
- Risk Analysis
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Inter-Agency Cooperation
- Disaster Planning
- Plan Integration

PROJECT TEAM

Vision Planning & Consulting
JMT (Subconsultant)

CLIENT CONTACT

Brandon Olenik, Administrative Officer
Kent County Department of Public Safety - Emergency Management Division
Ph: 302-735-2201
brandon.olenik@co.kent.de.us

Photo Courtesy of Kent County, DE

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Vision Planning and Consulting (VPC) developed the 2021 All-Hazards Mitigation Plan Update for Kent County, Delaware in compliance with the requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. The project was funded by Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) funds from FEMA and administered by the Delaware Emergency Management Agency.

PROJECT SUMMARY

VPC updated the risk and vulnerability assessment for 18 different natural, human-caused, and/or technological hazards which reflected changes in Kent County's priorities since the 2016 HMP. Each hazard was defined and included information on; location/extent; range of magnitude; past occurrences; loss estimates; inventory of vulnerable assets; impact to development; and a risk factor rank.

A final risk score was calculated for all hazards based on probability, impact, spatial extent, warning time, and duration, and then ranked the hazards. High priority hazards included Flood; Hurricane/Coastal Storms; Winter Storms; Drought/Extreme Heat; and Severe Thunderstorms/Tornados. Pandemic was also included as a hazard for this Plan Update.

VPC's stakeholder engagement strategy included local stakeholders, all 20 county municipalities, and the public and included a series of Steering Committee meetings, municipality meetings, and selection of public input opportunities to help inform the Plan. As a large part of the County included rural areas and small municipalities (less than 500 persons), VPC had to develop a creative public engagement strategy with unique ways to communicate with, and gather information from remote and typically underserved areas.

engaged and involved these communities through phone calls and/or one-on-one meetings to gather the necessary information. The Plan update took place during the height of the COVID-19 Pandemic, which prevented traditional forms of in-person engagement from taking place. Through the virtual setting, although four municipalities chose not to participate in the planning process or adopt the county plan, VPC achieved over 80 percent municipal participation, which is a significant increase from the plan's previous iterations.

VPC worked with the County to update existing actions and develop new mitigation actions related to: Structures/Infrastructure, Natural Systems Protection, Local Plans and Ordinances, and Education and Awareness. A total of 28 new mitigation actions and their associated implementation strategies were developed and tailored to the needs and priorities of the County and its communities. VPC also worked with the Steering Committee, municipalities, & community representatives, to develop at least one mitigation action per hazard, for each municipality.

The Plan was approved by DEMA and FEMA with very few required edits prior to adoption by the Kent County Commission and the participating municipalities in early 2021.